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**Linda McCulloch**  
Superintendent

DATE: November 10, 2004

TO: School Food Authority (SFA) Administrators and Food Service Directors

FROM: Christine Emerson, Director  
School Nutrition Programs

SUBJECT: Procurement and Service of Whole Grain Products

Congress has included a new provision in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 that endorses the consumption of foods consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. This memo is intended to provide guidance to school food authorities (SFAs) to increase the procurement and service of foods that are recommended in the most recent dietary guidelines, specifically whole grains.

Eating whole grain products is advocated by health and nutrition experts. The current Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends daily consumption of foods with whole grains as a primary ingredient to protect against many chronic diseases. Increasing the consumption of fiber rich carbohydrates over those found in highly processed products may also be an important step in fighting our national obesity epidemic.

The importance of whole grains in the diet is now being recognized by food manufacturers and processors. Recently, a major cereal manufacturer has made a decision to reformulate its product line using only whole grains. School Nutrition Programs encourages SFAs to inquire about the availability of whole grain products when developing product specification and making procurement plans. We would also like SFAs to offer whole grains whenever possible as part of their efforts to promote healthy eating and improve the nutritional well-being of their students.

If you have questions, please contact Holly Humphrey, School Nutrition Programs Specialist, (406) 444-4413.